Marian Catechism

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PREFACE

There have been, in recent years, some attempts at Marian catechisms.[1] They lack, however, in my humble opinion, two indispensable qualities in such a work: breadth and organicity. It is no wonder that this is so. I have read that the Catechism is the most difficult work that exists, since it requires a full possession of the subject matter. And to remedy this defect which, requested by many, I have decided to write this Marian catechism. I called it a catechism, since it wants to be a clear, ordered, and synthetic exposition of everything concerning Marian history, dogma, and worship, according to the classic form of questions and answers. But I warn you that the word catechism, in this case, is not synonymous with elementary education and for children. So it can even reach the hands of adults, that is, of all those who want to achieve a synthetically complete culture around the Blessed Virgin. That is why it is a small Marian sum. To serve as help to those who have to explain this Marian Catechism to others, I have accompanied the different parts and topics with various bibliographical notes.[2]

The development of the various themes we will touch upon in this Catechism can be found in my volume of *Marian Instructions*. I trust that this work of synthesis, penetrating all religious institutes, all *Catholic Action* associations, and possibly all Christian families, will

[1] The main works of this genre are: Bosio A. de Trobaso OFM Catecismo Mariano. Tratado de mariologia. Venecia, libr. Emiliana Editrice, 1931.- La Virge Marie, pequeña Somme Mariale editada por el Institut des Petits Frères de Marie, Lyon, 1937. Petit Catéchisme sur la Sainte Vierge, Lyon 1933, en la colección "Ecole libre- Martinoli G., La Madonna, Lecciones de catequesis, Lugano-Massagno, 1941. Tonolo F. Breviario della Madonna, Breve Catechismo Mariano, Milan, Op. Della Regalitá de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo.

[2] A wealth of information on Marian doctrine can be found in the journal *Marianum* (*Ephemerides Mariologiae*). It has been published since 1939 by the Servants of Mary at the St. Alexis Falconieri College (located on Viale Trenta Aprile); this specific entry was updated in 1944.

contribute significantly to making the Blessed Virgin known in all her brilliant light, and to making her ever more loved, venerated, and imitated.

THE NECESSITY OF THE STUDY OF MARY [3]

1-5

Q. 1: Is it necessary to know the Virgin Mary?

A: After the knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the most necessary knowledge is that which concerns the Virgin Mary.

Q. 2: Why is it necessary to know the Virgin Mary?

A: It is necessary to know the Virgin Mary because a Christian must know at least what is essential to Christianity; and the Virgin Mary is not something incidental, but is essential to Christianity.

Q. 3: In what sense is the Virgin Mary essential to Christianity?

A: Our Lady is essential to Christianity in the sense that she enters into its very substance, since Christianity is the religion of the Son of Mary. That is why the Blessed Virgin Mary is placed at the heart of the Nicene and Apostles Creed with these words: "*Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.*" Without Mary, Christianity is inconceivable. For this reason,

[3] See Roschini GM, Mariology, Vol. 1, Introduction to Mariology, Ed. Ancora, 1941.

Marian devotion is a mark of the true Church, in the sense that where there is no Marian devotion, there is not even the true Catholic Church.[4]

Q. 4: Is there also any other reason that compels us to know Madonna?

A: Yes, there is also another reason, and that is that the Virgin, by divine free will, has a most singular influence on our spiritual life and on our eternal salvation. In fact, the Church invokes her as "our life, our sweetness, and our hope."[5]

Q. 5: Why has knowledge of Our Lady become increasingly necessary in our times?

A: Knowledge of Our Lady has become increasingly necessary in our time because it is incomparably sadder, for many reasons, than all times past, and therefore we feel more the need for the help of Her who has been constituted by God as the perennial enemy of Satan, the "Victorious One in all of God's battles,"[6] she who "from the first moment of her existence had from God the power and the mission to crush the head of Satan."[7]

[4] Cardinal Billot, De Verbo Incarnato, Thesis. 41, 1941
[5] Antiphon: Salve Regina
[6] Pope Pius XII, Radio Message to Portugal on Oct. 31, 1942
[7] Pope Pius IX in prayer “Rodeate, etc.”

THE SOURCES OF MARIOLOGY

6-8

Q. 6: Where is the doctrine about the Virgin contained?

A: The doctrine about the Virgin is contained in the deposit of Revelation, guarded and expounded by the Magisterium of the Church, that is, in Sacred Scripture and in the Tradition of the Church.

Q. 7: Are there many places in Sacred Scripture where Mary Most Holy is mentioned?

A: The places in Sacred Scripture where the Blessed Virgin is mentioned directly are not many, but they are more than enough to give us the highest idea of her. The words would suffice: "Mary, of whom Jesus was born" (Matthew 1:16).

Q. 7: Who are the principal Marian Fathers, Doctors, and writers?

A: The principal Marian Fathers are: St. Ephrem the Syrian (+373 AD), St. Epiphanius (+402 AD), St. Cyril of Alexandria (+444 AD), St. Germanus (+733 AD), and St. John Damascene (+749 AD) among the Eastern Fathers; St. Ambrose (+397 AD), St. Jerome (+420 AD), St. Augustine (+430 AD), and St. Ildefonsus of Toledo (+669 AD) among the Western Fathers The

principal Marian doctors are: St. Bede V. (+735 AD), St. Peter Damian (+1072 AD), St. Anselm (+1109 AD), St. Bernard (+1153 AD), St. Bonaventure (+1274 AD), St. Thomas Aquinas (+1274 AD), St. Albert the Great (+1280 AD), St. Peter Canisius (+1597 AD), St. Robert Bellarmine (+1621 AD), St. Francis de Sales (+1622 AD), and St. Alphonsus Liguori (+1787 AD).

The main *Marian* writers are: Ricardo de San Lorenzo (+1245 AD), Raimundo Giordano (+1381 AD), S. Bernardino de Siena (+1444 AD), Dionisio Certosino (+1471 AD), S. Lorenzo de Brindis (+1619 AD), P. Francesco Poiré SI (+1637 AD), P. Giustino Miechow O.P. (+1642 AD), Fr. Giovanni Batt. Novati (+1648 AD), Fr. Bartolomeo de los Ríos OSA (+1652 AD), Fr. Dionisio Petavio SI (+1652 AD), Fr. Giorgio De Rhodes SI (+1661 AD), Fr. Teofilo Raynaud SI (+1663 AD), Fr. Cristoforo Vega SI (+1672 AD), Fr. Vincenzo Contenson OP (+1674 AD), Fr. Ippolito Marracci (+1675 AD), St. Juan Eudes (+1680 AD), Father Luigi d'Argentan (+1680 AD), Fr. Paolo Segneri SI (+1694 AD), G. Benigno Bossebo (+1704 AD), St. Luis María Grignion de Montfort (+1716 AD), Fr. Giov. Cris. Trombelli (+1784 AD), el Ven. William Chaminade (+1850 AD), Rohault de Fleury (+1875 AD), P. Carlo Passaglia S.I. (+1887 AD), Augustus Nicolás (+1888 AD), Augusto Roskovàny (+1892 AD), Card. Alessio M. Lépicier OSM (+1936 AD) etc.

PRINCIPLES OF MARIAN DOCTRINE [8]

Q. 9: What are the principles on which all Marian doctrine is based?

A: The principles on which all Marian doctrine is based are five: one primary and four secondary.

Q. 10: What is the primary principle?

A: The main principle on which Marian doctrine is based is: Mary Most Holy is the Mother of God and mediatrix of man. This principle, in effect, expresses the very essence of Mary, her mission, that is, the reason for her existence. From it are deduced and to it are reduced.

Q. 11: What are the four secondary principles?

A: The four secondary principles upon which Marian doctrine is based, all derived from the primary principle, are:

1) The principle of singularity;

2) The principle of fittingness;

3) The principle of eminence;

[8] Roschini, Mariology I: pp. 429-480

4) The principle of analogy or likeness to Christ.

Q. 12: How is the principle of singularity explained?

A: The principle of singularity is expressed as follows: "Since the Holy Virgin is a completely unique creature, she constitutes a separate order and claims for herself entirely singular privileges that are not appropriate to any other creature."

Q. 13: How is the principle of fittingness expressed?

A: The principle of fittingness is expressed as follows: "All those perfections that are truly fitting to the dignity of Mother of God and Mediatrix of man should be attributed to the Blessed Virgin, provided they are grounded in revelation and are not contrary to faith and reason." This principle is based on the fact that when God chooses someone for a mission, He also gives all the help that makes them suitable to fulfill it.

Q. 14: How is the principle of eminence stated?

A: The principle of eminence is expressed as follows: "All the privileges of nature, grace, and glory that God has given to the other Saints, the Holy Virgin, Queen of Saints, had to grant in some way as well." This principle is founded on the incomparable superiority of Mary over all the saints, considered not only individually, but also all together.

Q. 15: What is the principle of analogy or likeness to Christ?

A: The principle of analogy or likeness to Christ is thus stated: “To the various privileges of Christ’s humanity, similar privileges correspond in the Virgin, depending on the condition of both. This principle is based on her quality as Mother of God and Companion of Christ in the whole work of redemption. The Mother, in effect, resembles her Son, and the companion, the companion.”

THE BENEFITS OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY AND DIVISION OF HER STUDY [9]

16-19

Q. 16: What are the main advantages of studying Mary?

A: The main advantages of studying Mary are three: it facilitates for us: **1**) Knowledge and love of God; **2**) Knowledge and love of Jesus Christ; **3**) Knowledge and love of the Blessed Virgin. These advantages make the study of Mary extremely delightful.

Q. 17: How should one study to obtain these aforementioned advantages?

A: To obtain these benefits, it is necessary to study the Blessed Virgin: 1) With love; 2) With diligence; 3) With method.

Q. 18: What is required to have a less inadequate idea of Mary?

A: To have a less inadequate idea of Mary, it is required that she be considered in her history, in her dogma, and in her veneration.

Q. 19: Into how many parts can the Marian Catechism be divided?

[9] Roschini, Mariology I, Introduction to Mariology

A: The Marian Catechism can be divided into three parts:

1) History of Mary; 2) Marian Dogma; 3) Marian Devotion

HISTORY OF MARY[10]

20-53

Q. 20: Into how many periods can the story of Mary be divided?

A: The story of Mary Most Holy can be logically divided into two main periods: 1) From her birth to the Annunciation; 2) From the Annunciation to the Assumption.

Q. 21: From what lineage does Mary descend?

A: Mary descends from the royal line of David, although her relatives had already lost the fortune of their former greatness.

Q. 22: Who were the parents of the Virgin?

A: The parents of Our Lady were two great saints, called—as ancient tradition says—Joachim and Anne.

Q. 23: Were there any miracles at the conception of the Virgin?

[10] Of great depth and scientific rigor is the book "Life of the Virgin Mary" by this magnificent author, who summarizes the best of other authors whom he cites in this note in the original Italian

A: According to ancient tradition, the Virgin's mother, Saint Anne, being infertile, miraculously conceived this incomparable child.

Q. 24: Where was Mary born?

A: There is no certainty about the place. Three sites compete for the honor of having given birth to her: Sepphoris, Nazareth, and Jerusalem. The most common opinion is in favor of Jerusalem.

Q. 25: What name was given to Our Lady?

A: Virgin was given, not without divine inspiration, the name Mary, which means "Lady" or "Beloved of God." It is therefore a name that we must pronounce with respect, trust, and love, being the greatest, most powerful, and most adorable name after “Jesus”.

Q. 27: Where did the Virgin go in her adolescence?

A: According to an ancient tradition, she spent her adolescence in the Temple precincts of Jerusalem, in a life of prayer and work.

Q. 28: What did Our Lady do after leaving the Temple?

A: When the Virgin left the Temple, around the age of 15, she became betrothed to Saint Joseph, a just man, also of the house of David.

Q. 29: What is the Annunciation?

A: It is the announcement that God made to Mary, through the Archangel Saint Gabriel, of her mission as Mother of God and mediatrix for humankind.

Q. 30: How did the Annunciation happen?

A: The way in which the Annunciation occurred is described to us in Saint Luke, thus:
"*In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, 'Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.' Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid Mary, because you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." But Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called the Son of God. Even your relative Elizabeth,*

is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was called infertile is in her sixth month. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. (Luke 1:26-38)

Q. 31: Where did the Virgin Mary go immediately after the Annunciation?

A: Immediately after the Annunciation, the Virgin Mary left Nazareth and went to a mountain in Judea to visit her relative, Saint Elizabeth, who was about to give birth to the Forerunner of Christ, Saint John the Baptist.

Q. 32: How did Mary's meeting with Saint Elizabeth happen?

A: The encounter, according to the story narrated by Saint Luke, happened in this way: "In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a town in the hill country of Judah. She entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.'" Luke 1:39-45.

Q. 33: What was Our Lady's response to Elizabeth's words of praise?

A: To Elizabeth's words of praise, Our Lady responded by exalting the Lord with the admirable canticle "Magnificat." In it, she foretells the universality of his worship, saying: "for God has looked upon the humiliation of his servant, from now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me."

Q. 34: How long did the Virgin stay with Elizabeth?

A: She stayed there for three months, that is, until the birth of the Baptist, and returned to Nazareth.

Q. 35: What happened after Mary's return to Nazareth?

A: After Mary's return to Nazareth, St. Joseph was troubled because he could not explain the motherhood of his betrothed Mary, and so he thought of secretly abandoning her. But, assured in a dream by an angel about the virginal conception of the Redeemer, he took her with him. (*Note*: The same author in other books leans toward the interpretation that St. Joseph never doubts Our Lady's integrity, but, filled with reverential fear and unaware of his role in this mystery, withdraws into silence.)

Q. 36: What happened while they awaited the birth of Jesus?

A: While they awaited the birth of Jesus, an order arrived from the Roman emperor, to whom Judea was subject, prescribing a census of all Jews in their place of origin. And since the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph were originally from Bethlehem, being of the family of David, they were obliged to go to this city for the census.

Q. 37: What happened when they arrived in Bethlehem?

A: Once in Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph asked for hospitality at a poor inn. But, finding no suitable place, they were forced to take refuge in a cave. Here Jesus, the Redeemer of the world, saw the light. The Virgin Mother of God wrapped him in swaddling clothes, laid him in a manger, and adored him.

Q. 38: What wonders took place at the birth of Jesus?

A: Several miracles occurred: an angel warned some shepherds of the Redeemer's birth and invited them to worship him. A multitude of angels, united with the archangel, sang: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." A star led the wise men from the east to the newborn, to worship and offer three gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh, acknowledging him as true King, God and Man.

Q. 39: What happened eight days after Jesus' birth?

A: Eight days after Jesus' birth, according to the law, the Lord was circumcised and given the name Jesus, which means Savior.

Q. 40: What happened forty days after Jesus' birth?

A: Forty days after the birth of Jesus, his presentation in the temple took place, him being the firstborn, and the legal purification of his Most Holy Mother. She submitted to it, although she was not obliged, not being an ordinary mother.

Q. 41: What happened on the occasion of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple and the Purification of the Virgin?

A: On the occasion of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple and the Purification, the famous prophecy of the holy old man Simeon took place, who, inspired from above, addressed Mary, saying: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too." Luke 2:35. Thus he foretold the passion of the Son and the no less immense participation of the mother.

Q. 42: Did the Holy Family stay in Bethlehem for a long time?

A: No, the Holy Family, after the purification rite, did not stay in Bethlehem for long, because they had to flee to Egypt, due to the angel's warning, to save the Child Jesus from the cruel persecution of Herod (called "the Great") who had ordered the murder of all the children of Bethlehem and the surrounding area, around the age of two. This was to eliminate the King of the Jews about whom the Magi had spoken.

Q. 43: How long did the Holy Family stay in Egypt?

A: The Holy Family stayed in Egypt until the death of Herod (Mt 2:19). However, we do not know the precise date of Herod's death, so the length of the Holy Family's stay in Egypt cannot be determined exactly.

Q. 44: Did the Holy Family who returned from Egypt always stay in Nazareth?

A: The Holy Family who returned from Egypt always remained in Nazareth, until the beginning of Jesus' public life. Every year, however, they went to Jerusalem to worship God in the temple. When he was twelve years old, Jesus also went there, but on his return, he stayed in Jerusalem without Mary and Joseph noticing. In the afternoon, they discovered Jesus was missing. Soon they returned to Jerusalem and, tormented by grief, after three days of anxious searching, they found him in the temple disputing with the doctors of the law

Q. 45: What did Our Lady do in Cana, at the beginning of Jesus' public life?

A: At the beginning of Jesus' public life, the Blessed Virgin was invited to a wedding feast held in Cana of Galilee, and obtained, through her prayers, Jesus' miracle of the transformation of water into wine, the first of many miracles performed by Jesus (Jn 2:1)

Q. 46: What did Our Lady do during the three years of Jesus' public ministry?

A: During the three years of Jesus' public ministry, Our Lady followed, at least spiritually, the various sad and joyful events of Jesus' apostolate, and sometimes appeared in the midst of the people (Mt 12:46).

Q. 47: What did Our Lady do during the Passion of Jesus?

A: The Virgin, warned of the ignominious betrayal, the capture and unjust condemnation of her divine Son, went to meet him on the way to Calvary, and then attended, without fear, his crucifixion, death, and burial. There, Jesus, before dying, in the person of Saint John, proclaimed her the spiritual Mother of all mankind (Jn 19:27).

Q. 48: To whom did the risen Jesus first appear?

A: It is a common opinion, based on tradition and common sense, that the newly resurrected Jesus appeared first to his Blessed Mother. In all probability, he then appeared to her several times during the forty days he remained here on earth before ascending into heaven.

Q. 49: Did the Virgin also attend the Ascension of Christ on the Mount of Olives?

A: Although the Gospel does not say so, it is more than obvious that the Virgin, along with the Apostles, must have attended the glorious Ascension of her son on the Mount of Olives.

Q. 50: What did Our Lady do after the Ascension of Jesus?

A: Immediately after the Ascension of Jesus, the Virgin withdrew with the apostles to the Upper Room to wait, in the recollection of prayer, for the promised descent of the Holy Spirit in visible form, which occurred ten days later, on the day of Pentecost.

Q. 51: How long did the Virgin remain on earth after Christ's Ascension?

A: It is not known precisely. It is known, however, that in those years, as a loving Mother, she watched over the destiny of the Church, sustaining and comforting the first faithful with her most sweet presence and her example.

Q. 52: Did the Virgin die?

A: According to common opinion, the Virgin, to resemble Christ her divine Son, died[11] in Jerusalem or in Ephesus. But she did not die of illness, but in an ecstasy of love.

Q. 53: Was the Virgin taken up to heaven body and soul?

A: Yes, the Virgin, shortly after her death, rose again and was assumed into heaven, where, amidst the indescribable joy of the entire heavenly court, she was crowned Queen of heaven and earth.

[11] 11 The encyclical "Munificentissimus Deus" of Pope Pius XII simply proclaims the dogma of the Assumption thus: "(...) the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever-Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed into heavenly glory, body and soul." The pontiff cites, as a "principled example," the sacramentary that Pope Adrian I, of immortal memory, sent to Emperor Charlemagne, in which it reads: "Worthy of veneration for us, O Lord, is the feast of this day, on which the holy Mother of God suffered temporal death, but could not be humbled by the bonds of death, she who gave birth to your Son, our Lord." (Sacramentarium Gregorianum).

NT: Here the word ecstasy should not be understood in its proper sense, but analogously, since as a mystical phenomenon, it is characteristic of souls that have not reached the summit of perfection, occurring due to a lack of disposition of the subject to the action of God. Our Lady, perfectly disposed to His action, lacked this phenomenon

THE MARIAN DOGMA

54-55

Q. 54. What is required to know the Marian dogma well?

A: To know the Marian dogma well, the various truths concerning the Blessed Virgin, it is necessary to consider her in the singular mission she received from God and in the entirely singular privileges granted to her in view of her mission.

Q. 55. Into how many sections, therefore, can this second part of the Marian Catechism be divided?

A: This second part of the Marian Catechism can be logically divided into two sections, namely:

1) Mary's most singular mission;

2) Her unique privileges.

THE PREDESTINATION OF MARY[12]

56-64

Q. 56. To what mission was Our Lady destined by God?

A: The Virgin was destined for the highest and unique mission of Mother of God and Mediatrix of mankind.

Q. 57. To fully understand this singular mission of Mary, how should it be considered?

A: To fully understand the most singular mission of Mary, it must be considered in four ways:

1) In its predestination.

2) In its prophetic prediction.

3) In its application.

4) In its immediate consequence, that is, in the royal dignity that such a mission conferred upon Mary.

Q. 58. What does the word predestination mean?

[12] 12 See Roschini G, Mariology, T. II, p. 9-73.

A: The word predestination means that eternal act by which God has preordained everything that, through his divine grace, must be verified in time.

Q. 59. Does predestination exist?

A: Yes, predestination exists since nothing happens in Time that has not been ordained by God from eternity.

Q. 60. What are the characteristics of Mary's predestination to her unique mission?

A: The prerogatives of Mary's predestination to her singular mission as Mother of God and Mediatrix of mankind are principally four, namely, Mary's predestination was:

1) Very singular, and therefore different from that of all other predestined persons

2) Prior to that of all others.

3) A co-cause of that of all others.

4) Gratuitous

Q. 61. What do we mean when we say that Mary's predestination to her mission was most singular?

A: When it is affirmed that the predestination of the Blessed Virgin to her mission as Mother of God and Mediatrix of mankind is most singular, it means that it is very different from that of all others, because she was predestined to a unique mission, and therefore one entirely her own. While all others are predestined to eternal glory, the Blessed Virgin was predestined to the singular mission of Mother of God and Mediatrix of mankind, and, consequently, to that unique degree of grace and glory worthy of her unparalleled mission.

Q. 62. What do we mean when we say that Mary's predestination to her mission was prior to that of all others?

A: When it is stated that Mary's predestination to her mission was prior (logically and not chronologically) to that of all the other predestined ones, it means that the Blessed Virgin, together with Christ (though not on equal footing), was willed by God—in our understanding — over all creatures in the universe, so that all other creatures or things were willed or permitted by God in view of and for the glory of Christ and Mary, Heads of all creation.

Q. 63. What do we mean when we affirm that Mary's predestination to her mission was a contributing cause to the predestination of all others?

A: When it is stated that Mary's predestination was a co-cause of the predestination of all others, it means that she is a secondary (along with Christ, the primary cause), efficient—that is, meritorious, exemplary, and final cause of all the elect to eternal glory. She is an efficient or

meritorious cause, since all the elect were predestined by God to glory in view of the merits of the mediation of Jesus and Mary. She is an exemplary cause because she is the prototype, after Christ, of the predestined. And she is a final cause because all the elect have been predestined to heaven for the glory of Christ and Mary, as their royal procession.

Q. 64. What do we mean when we say that Mary's predestination to her singular mission was gratuitous?

A: When it is stated that Mary's predestination to her singular mission is gratuitous, we mean that the Blessed Virgin did not, properly speaking, merit the election to her singular mission and consequently to the highest degree of glory she now enjoys in heaven. However, it must be believed that the Virgin responded perfectly to the grace she received from the Lord in view of her singular mission, showed herself worthy of it, and therefore, in a certain way, merited it.

Q. 65. Was the unique mission to which the Blessed Virgin Mary was predestined foretold before it was carried out?

A: Yes, the unsurpassed mission to which Mary was predestined was foretold several times before it was carried out. These prophecies were like the link between God's eternal act of predestinating the Virgin to her Mission and the implementation of that same eternal plan in time.

Q. 66. How are the prophecies about the Blessed Virgin Mary divided?

A: The prophecies concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary are divided into two classes: Direct prophecies and indirect prophecies. The former are those that are expressed directly with words; the latter, on the other hand, are those that are expressed directly with things and indirectly with significant words.

Q. 67. What are the main direct prophecies about the Blessed Virgin?

A: The main direct prophecies about the Blessed Virgin are: Genesis 3:15: The "Protoevangelium" in which the announcement of the God-Man and the Mother of God, Mediatrix, takes place; an announcement made by God immediately after the fall of our first parents. | Isaiah 7:14: Isaiah's prophecy concerning the sign of the Virgin who was to give birth to Emmanuel, or God with us.[13]

[13] Summa Mariología, T. II, pág. 86-179.

MARY'S MISSION IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION[14]

Q. 71. When was Mary's unique mission put into action?

A: Mary's singular mission was formally implemented at the time when, on the day of the Annunciation, after it was revealed to her by the Angel, she pronounced her memorable Fiat (=let it be done). At that moment, in fact, she became the Mother of God and Mediatrix of humankind.

Q. 72. Is it true that the Virgin is—according to what had been predestined—Mother of God and true Mediatrix of humankind?

A: It is absolutely certain that the Blessed Virgin became the true Mother of God and Mediatrix of mankind, according to what had been prophesied. The proofs are evident.

Q. 73. What are the proofs to demonstrate that Mary Most Holy is truly the Mother of God?

A: The proofs to demonstrate that Mary Most Holy is truly the Mother of God are derived from Sacred Scripture and Tradition.

[14] See Roschini GM, Mariology, T. II, p. 179-2

Q. 74. How is it demonstrated, by Sacred Scripture, that the Blessed Virgin is certainly the Mother of God?

A: Sacred Scripture tells us explicitly that the Blessed Virgin is truly the Mother of Jesus (Matthew 2:2, etc.) and that Jesus is true God. It tells us implicitly that she is truly the Mother of God. But it also tells us this explicitly, in the exclamation of Saint Elizabeth, under the influence of the Holy Spirit: "And why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord (that is, of my God) should come to me?" (Luke 1:43).

Q. 75. How is it demonstrated, by Tradition, that the Blessed Virgin is certainly the Mother of God?

A: All Christian Tradition, from the apostles to our times, has always professed, without interruption, this solemn and fundamental truth, as the history of Christianity demonstrates.

Q. 76. In what precise sense is the Blessed Virgin called the true Mother of God?

A: The Blessed Virgin is called the true Mother of God, not in the sense that she gave birth to the Divinity, but in the sense that she has generated a Divine Person (the person of the Word, the second Person of the Holy Trinity) according to human nature.

Q. 77. Is it fitting that a woman be the Mother of God?

A: Reason deems it supremely fitting that a woman be the Mother of God, because such a fact vividly reveals the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God.

Q. 78. Have there been heretics who have denied this great truth?

A: Yes, several heretics denied it both directly and indirectly (that is, denying the Divinity or the Humanity of Jesus). Nestorius, in the 5th century, denied it directly and was solemnly condemned at the Council of Ephesus (431 AD).

Q. 79. What are the consequences of Mary's Divine Motherhood for her?

A: The consequences of divine motherhood are incalculable for Mary. In fact, Divine Motherhood elevates her to a dizzying greatness and places her immediately after God in the vast hierarchy of beings, making her belong to the hypostatic order (insofar as through her, and in her, the Word was united hypostatically, that is, personally, with human nature), an order superior to the order of nature, grace, and glory. For this reason, the Fathers and Writers of the Church have exhausted their vocabulary to exalt her, without, however, being able to praise her as she deserves. Her greatness borders on the infinite.

Q. 80. What does Mediatrix of Men mean?

A: Mediatrix of Men means that the Blessed Virgin:

1) Is, as it were, in the middle between God and men;

2) Unites them, "connects" them.

Q. 81. In what way can the Blessed Virgin be called Mediatrix, if only one, according to Saint Paul, is the Mediator between God and Men, Jesus Christ?

A: Mary's Mediation in no way diminishes the fact that Christ is the only Mediator between God and men, since it is a secondary Mediation, subordinate to that of Christ, and derives all its efficacy from His Mediation, which, instead of being diminished and obscured, is more enlightened and exalted.

Q. 82. In what way is the Blessed Virgin the mediatrix between God and men?

A: The Blessed Virgin is, in three ways, Mediatrix between God and men:

1) Reconciling them with God (Co-Redemptrix);

2) Consequently regenerating them to the supernatural life of grace (Spiritual Mother of men);

3) Presenting the desires of men to God and transmitting to men the benefits of God (Dispensation of all graces).[15]

[15] Roschini, Mariología T. II pág. 272-296. Bover "La Mediación Universal de Maria"

Q. 83. What does the title of Co-Redemptrix of the human race mean?

A: The title of Co-Redemptrix of the human race means that the Blessed Virgin cooperated with Christ in our redemption, just as Eve had cooperated with Adam in our ruin.

Q. 84. What are the proofs that demonstrate that the Blessed Virgin is truly the Co-Redemptrix of mankind?

A: The proofs to demonstrate that the Blessed Virgin is truly Co-Redemptrix of mankind are deduced from Sacred Scripture and Tradition.

Q. 85. How is it proven, from Sacred Scripture, that the Blessed Virgin is the Co-Redemptrix of mankind?[16]

A: Sacred Scripture proves this truth with the words of the Protoevangelium (Genesis 3:15): "I will put enmity between you (the devil) and the Woman (Mary), and between your offspring and her offspring (Christ). He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." With these words, the Virgin, the New Eve, is associated by God with Christ, the New Adam, in the struggle and triumph over the infernal serpent, the devil. Sacred Scripture also presents the Blessed Virgin at the Annunciation as freely consenting to her mission of becoming, with Christ the Mediator, the

[16] Cfr. Roschini GM, Mariología, T. II, pág. 297-479.

Mediatrix of mankind in the work of their salvation. For God willed that our salvation should depend on the Redemption.

Q. 86. How is it proven by Tradition that the Virgin is Co-Redemptrix?

A: All tradition, from the apostles to the present, testifies that the Blessed Virgin was the reparation for Eve, the cause of our salvation, meriting satisfaction for original sin and reopening the gates of heaven.

Q. 87. Was it fitting that the Blessed Virgin be united as Co-Redemptrix to the Redeemer in the work of our Redemption?

A: It was most fitting, because divine wisdom and justice shine forth in this union, making the woman, who had been the cause and source of a curse, also become the cause and source of a blessing.

THE SPIRITUAL MOTHER OF MANKIND[17]

Q. 88. What does the title Spiritual Mother of Mankind mean?

A: The title Spiritual Mother of Mankind means that the Virgin has cooperated with Christ, as Mother, in our regeneration to the supernatural life of grace lost through sin.

Q. 89. What are the proofs to demonstrate that the Virgin is truly the spiritual Mother of mankind?

A: The proofs to demonstrate that the Blessed Virgin is truly the spiritual Mother of mankind are taken from Sacred Scripture and Tradition.

Q. 90. How is it proven, from Sacred Scripture, that the Virgin is the true Spiritual Mother of men?

A: Sacred Scripture proves this truth with the principle, so inculcated by Saint Paul, of our spiritual incorporation into Christ, by which we form with Him, our head, one mystical body (Romans 12:5).

[17] Cf. Roschini G. M., Mariology, T. II, p. 479-5

The members are conceived and born of the same mother along with the head. Therefore, all men, as mystical members of Christ, together with Him, our Head, were conceived and born of Mary: the mystical Head was conceived on the day of the Annunciation, when she physically conceived Jesus; and we were born on Mount Calvary at the very instant of the death of Jesus, our head, when the Redemption of the human race, begun in Nazareth with Mary's Fiat, in accordance with the divine decree, was accomplished. For this reason, right there on Calvary, shortly before dying, Jesus solemnly proclaimed Mary's spiritual and universal motherhood with the words: "Behold your son!"—"Here is your mother!" (John 19:26-27).

Q. 91. How is it proven by Tradition that the Blessed Virgin is the spiritual Mother of humankind?

A: All Christian tradition, from the apostles to our own day, has proclaimed Mary's spiritual motherhood in the most varied, sweet, and moving ways.

Q. 92. Was it fitting that the Blessed Virgin be willed by God to be the spiritual Mother of humankind?

A: Yes, because the supernatural order is analogous to the natural order, proceeding from the same divine mind. Just as in the natural order God wisely gave us a mother, it was very fitting that He also gave us a mother in the supernatural order, since we have a great need for her throughout our earthly life.

Q. 93. What does the title Dispenser of all graces mean?

A: The title Dispenser of all graces means that God, by His free will, desired that all individual graces, which descend from Heaven to earth, should pass through the hands of Mary, that is, be granted in view of her merits and because of her intercession.

Q. 94. What are the proofs to show that the Blessed Virgin is the true dispenser of all graces?

A: The evidence to demonstrate that the Blessed Virgin is the true dispenser of all graces is derived from Sacred Scripture and Tradition.

Q. 95. How do the Sacred Scriptures demonstrate that the Blessed Virgin is the true dispenser of all graces?

A: Sacred Scripture proves this truth with the Protoevangelium (Genesis 3:15), according to which the Mediator and Mediatrix are united in the whole work of our salvation, which encompasses not only the acquisition of all graces, but also their application or distribution. In addition, some events reported by the Gospel (the sanctification of John the Baptist, the miracle at the wedding in Cana, and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles on the day of

Pentecost), taken together, are eloquent indications that reveal the general law established by God according to which all graces come to man through Mary.[18]

Q. 96. How is it demonstrated by Tradition that the Blessed Virgin is the true Dispenser of all graces?

A: The entire Christian tradition, from the apostles to the present, proclaims implicitly and even explicitly the law according to which God willed that we should have everything through the hands of Mary. She is the neck through which all the influences of the Head (Christ) pass. She is the channel through which all the waters of grace flow from the source, that is, from Christ.

Q. 97. Was it fitting that the Blessed Virgin be constituted by God as the Dispenser of all graces?

A: It was most fitting, because this office of Mediatrix of all graces is a logical consequence of her mission as Co-Redemptrix and spiritual Mother of mankind. Having cooperated, in fact, as Co-Redemptrix, in the acquisition of all the graces of the Redemption, it was most fitting that she should also cooperate in their distribution. Since this Mother has regenerated us to the supernatural life of grace, it was right that she should cooperate in the progressive development of this life, in everyone and with each one in particular, through the distribution of all divine graces.

[18] Roschini GM, Mariology, T. II, p. 520-558.

Q. 98. What is the most immediate consequence of Mary's most singular mission?

A: The most immediate consequence of Mary's most singular mission is her queenship, since it is an essentially royal mission. The Mother of God and Mediatrix of mankind could not not be Queen of the universe.

Q. 99. What does the title Queen of the Universe mean?

A: The title Queen of the Universe means that the Blessed Virgin, together with Christ the King, has a primacy of excellence and power over all creatures, over all members of society. Her dignity entails all the powers proper to a Queen, a very singular personal radiance that reflects the splendor of the King of Kings, and a completely effective power of intercession, since she always obtains from the King of Kings everything she asks.

Q. 100. What are the proofs to demonstrate that the Blessed Virgin is the true Queen of the Universe?

A: The proofs to demonstrate that the Virgin is the true Queen of the Universe derive from Sacred Scripture and Tradition.[19]

[19] Roschini G. M., Mariology, T. II, pp. 558-577

Q. 101. How do Sacred Scriptures demonstrate that the Blessed Virgin is the Queen of the Universe?

A: Sacred Scriptures prove this truth by presenting the Virgin as the true Mother of the King of Kings, and therefore Queen. In fact, when the Angel spoke to her about the Son she was to conceive and bear, he said to her: "And the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign forever in the house of Jacob" (Luke 1:32). Saint Elizabeth also greets her: "Mother of my Lord" (Luke 1:43), that is, of my King, and therefore Queen. As Queen, she had been prefigured in the Old Testament by Bathsheba, mother of King Solomon (3 Kings 2:19-20) and of Esther, wife of King Ahasuerus (see Book of Esther). As queen who sits at the right hand of the king, she was prophesied by David in Psalm 44 (10-18).[20]

Q. 102. How does Tradition demonstrate that the Blessed Virgin is the true Queen of the Universe?

A: Tradition is unanimous regarding the queenship of Mary. A favorite theme of the Holy Fathers and writers of the Church, both Eastern and Western.

Q. 103. What are Mary's titles that entitle her to royalty?

[20] 20 1 Kings 2:19-20. Bathsheba came to King Solomon to speak to him on behalf of Adonijah. And the king rose to meet her, and bowed down to her, and sat down again on his throne, and made a chair for his mother, and she sat at his right hand. And she said, “I have a small request of you; do not refuse me.” And the king said to her, “Ask, my mother, for I will not refuse you.”

A: The titles of Mary that give her the right to Queenship are two: By natural right, being the Mother of God, King of kings; By acquired right or right of conquest, having reconquered us with Christ, and freeing us from the slavery of the devil.

Q. 104. Were the privileges granted to the Blessed Virgin Mary by God, in view of her most singular mission, many and unique?

A: The privileges granted by God to the Blessed Virgin Mary in view of her most singular mission were many and unique.

Q. 105. What were these privileges?

A: Some of these privileges refer to Mary's soul; others to her body; and others finally to both soul and body together.

Q. 106. What were the privileges over Mary's soul?

A: The privileges over Mary's soul can be reduced to two: exemption from all moral imperfection and a relative fullness of all moral perfection.

Q. 107. What were the moral imperfections from which Mary's soul was exempt?

A: The moral imperfections from which the Blessed Virgin was exempt are: immunity from original sin, from the infection of concupiscence, and from actual sin.

Q. 108. What does immunity from original sin, that is, the Immaculate Conception, mean?

A: The immunity from original sin, that is, the Immaculate Conception,[21] means that the Blessed Virgin Mary, from the first instant of her existence, that is, from the moment her soul was united to her body, was preserved by God, in anticipation of the merits of Jesus, her Son, from incurring original sin, that sin which she should have contracted through her descent from Adam. Pope Pius IX solemnly defined it thus on December 8, 1854.[22]

Q. 109. How is this singular privilege of the Blessed Virgin Mary proven?

A: This singular privilege of the Blessed Virgin Mary is proven both by Sacred Scripture and by Tradition.

Q. 110. How is the privilege of the Immaculate Conception proven by Sacred Scripture?

A: Sacred Scripture proves the Immaculate Conception with the Protoevangelium (Gen 3:15) and with the words spoken by the Angel to Mary. In the Protoevangelium, in fact, a special and unlimited enmity, a full and continuous opposition between the special and unlimited enmity, a

full and continuous opposition between the devil and sin, and the prophesied Woman.[21] [22] The Blessed Virgin has the same opposition that exists between the devil and Christ. And that opposition would not have been full and continuous if for an instant of her existence the The Blessed Virgin would have been subject to original sin, that is, to the devil. However, in the Protoevangelium, a complete victory of the Woman over the devil is foretold, and such a victory would not have been possible if the devil, even for an instant, had triumphed over her through sin. The truth of the Immaculate Conception is implicitly contained in the Protoevangelium. This singular privilege is also implicitly contained in the greeting given by the Angel to Mary: "Full of Grace, the Lord is with you." (Luke 1:28) The Blessed Virgin is thus proclaimed: 1) Full of Grace; 2) The Lord is with you; 3) Blessed among women, always without limit of time. This would not have been possible if, for a single instant, she had been touched by sin, which: 1) Is opposed to Grace; 2) Separates from God; 3) Is a source of curse.

Q. 111 How is the privilege of the Immaculate Conception proven by Tradition?

A: Christian Tradition has always recognized, first implicitly and then more explicitly, this

[21] Cfr. Roschini, Mariology. T III, pp. 10-111

[22] Bull Ineffabilis Deus: "For the honor of the Most Holy Trinity, for the joy of the Catholic Church, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, by that of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own: We define, affirm, and pronounce that the doctrine which holds that the Blessed Virgin Mary was preserved immune from all stain of original sin from the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace of Almighty God, in view of the merits of Christ Jesus, Savior of the human race, has been revealed by God and therefore must be firmly and constantly believed by all the faithful. Therefore, if anyone should have the temerity, which God forbid, to doubt in his heart what has been defined by Us, let him know and understand that his own judgment condemns him, that his faith has failed, and that he has fallen from the unity of the Church; and if, moreover, he should dare to manifest by word or writing or in any other external way what he feels in his heart, he is thereby subject to the penalties established by law."

outstanding Marian privilege. It recognized it implicitly, especially in the first centuries, acclaiming Mary the Virgin as the new Eve, true and worthy Mother of God, endowed with a most singular purity. The opposition this privilege received from some eminent doctors (i.e. Saint Thomas Aquinas, Saint Bonaventure) was intended to make it shine more brightly and attract the consideration of the faithful and the doctors.

Q. 112. Is it possible to reconcile this eminent privilege with the universality of Christ's redemption?

A: It is quite possible to reconcile this singular privilege with the universality of Christ's redemption if one keeps in mind that redemption can be of two kinds: liberative, that is, raising up what has fallen; preservative, that is, preventing it from falling. The Blessed Virgin was redeemed by preservative redemption and therefore, in a more sublime way, so that she might cooperate with the divine Redeemer in the liberating redemption of all men.

Q. 113. Is such a singular privilege fitting for Mary Most Holy?

A: Such a distinguished privilege is very fitting for Mary Most Holy, because without this privilege she would not have been a Mother worthy of God, because the ignominy of the Mother would necessarily have been reflected in her Son. Moreover, without such a privilege, she would not have been a worthy co-redemptrix of the human race, since she would in no way have been

able to cooperate worthily in raising others from their fall. And she herself would have been subject to ignominy.

Q. 114. What is meant by the wound of concupiscence?

A: The wound of concupiscence is that inclination to evil, that disordered inclination of the sensitive appetite to pleasure, whether licit or illicit, an inclination that prevents reason from acting upon it and is contrary to its control. It is one of the sad consequences of original sin, which has broken in us the harmony that God had placed between the sensitive appetite and the rational appetite, that is, the will.[23]

Q. 115. For what reason was the Blessed Virgin Mary immune to the wound of concupiscence?

A: The reason why the Blessed Virgin Mary was immune to the wound of concupiscence is her immunity to original sin, whose wound is a most sad consequence. The Blessed Virgin Mary was therefore always full of grace, in complete harmony, both internal and external, never disturbed by any disordered movement

Q. 116. Was the Blessed Virgin Mary always immune to any actual sin?

[23] Roschini T III, pp. 111

A: Yes, the Blessed Virgin Mary was always immune[24] to any actual sin, as the Church has always believed and as the Council of Trent explicitly declared (Session VI Canon 23)[25], pronouncing excommunication on anyone who denies such a truth.

Q. 117. For what reasons was the Blessed Virgin Mary immune from any actual sin?

A: According to St. Thomas Aquinas, the Blessed Virgin Mary was immune from any actual sin for three reasons: 1) Because she is the Mother of the Son of God, upon whom her ignominy would have been reflected; 2) Because she is closely united to Jesus Christ. What understanding can there be between Christ and Belial? (2 Corinthians 6:15). 3) Because she was indwelt by divine Wisdom, which never enters a body subject to sin (Wisdom 1:4). "Wisdom does not enter a soul that does evil, nor does it dwell in a body enslaved by sin."

Q. 118. What makes any sin morally impossible for the Virgin Mary?

A: Three things concurred to make any sin morally impossible for the Virgin: 1) A special Providence of God that watched over her to keep her from all occasions of sin; 2) The fullness of God's grace and help; 3) Exemption from the wound of concupiscence, so that the passions did not precede reason. Because He watched to keep her away from all occasions of sin; 2) The

[24] Roschini T III, pp. 119

[25] CAN. XXIII. If anyone says that a person, once justified, can no longer sin or lose grace, and that for this reason, whoever falls and sins was never truly justified; or on the contrary, that he can avoid all sins in the course of his life, even venial sins, except by a special divine privilege, as the Church believes of the Blessed Virgin Mary; let him be anathema.

fullness of God's grace and help; 3) Exemption from the wound of concupiscence, so that the passions did not precede reason. For these reasons, Mary's life on earth was like that of the blessed in Heaven.

Q. 119. Was Mary's soul full of Grace from the first instant of her existence?

A: Yes, the soul of the Blessed Virgin was full of Grace from the first instant of her existence.

Q. 120. What degree of Grace did Mary's soul receive at that instant?

A: Mary's soul received at that instant a degree of Grace certainly superior to that received by any Saint, as well as all the Saints together, including the Angels, and, in all probability, it was also superior to the degree of Grace of all the Saints together at the end of their earthly existence. Mary's initial Grace, as Mother of God and Mediatrix of mankind, when compared to all the Saints, is like a sun compared to a ray of light, or like an ocean compared to a drop.

Q. 121. Did the immense Grace granted by God to the Virgin's soul from the first instant of her existence increase afterward during her life?

A: Yes, the immense Grace granted by God to the soul of the Virgin from the first instant of her existence grew continually until the end of her earthly life, both through the continual practice of good works and through certain sacraments such as Baptism and the Eucharist.[26]

Q. 122. How could the Grace of Mary's soul grow continually if, from the first instant of her existence, she was already full of Grace?

A: The grace of Mary's soul was able to grow continually, even though from the first instant her existence was full of Grace; along with Grace, the capacity to receive it grew within her.

Q. 123. Was the Blessed Virgin Mary full of virtues, gifts, the Beatitudes, and fruits of the Holy Spirit? [27]

A: Yes, the Blessed Virgin Mary was also full of virtues, gifts, the Beatitudes, and fruits of the Holy Spirit because all these supernatural forms always accompanied the grace with which Mary was filled, thus constituting her court.

Q. 124. What virtues did the Blessed Virgin Mary possess?

[26] Roschini, Mariology TIII, pp. 151
[27] Roschini, Mariology TIII pp. 186

A: The Blessed Virgin Mary possessed all the virtues appropriate to her condition in the highest degree, that is to say, the theological virtues and the moral virtues, as appears in some brief but eloquent Gospel texts

Q. 125. Did the Blessed Virgin Mary also possess the gifts of the Holy Spirit in a high degree?

A: Yes, the Blessed Virgin also had the gifts of the Holy Spirit[28] in a high degree, that is, wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. Through these supernatural habits, her soul became perfectly docile to all the inspirations of divine grace.

Q. 126. Did the Blessed Virgin also have the fruits of the Holy Spirit?

A: If the Blessed Virgin also had the fruits of the Holy Spirit[29] That is to say, charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, long-suffering, gentleness, faith, modesty, temperance and chastity (Galatians 5:22-23). Through these fruits, the acts of her life were accompanied by a certain spiritual sweetness, similar to that which the body experiences when eating ripe fruit.

Q. 127. Did the Blessed Virgin also have the eight Beatitudes?

[28] Roschini Mariology TIII, pp. 216
[29] Roschini Mariology TIII, pp. 219

A: Yes, the Blessed Virgin also had, in a high degree, the Beatitudes: poverty of spirit, meekness, hunger and thirst for righteousness, mercy, peaceable mind, and persecution for righteousness' sake. Through these Beatitudes, which are nothing other than perfect acts of the virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, she had the greatest certainty of attaining eternal happiness.

Q. 128. Did the Blessed Virgin also have charisms or gratuitous graces?[30]

A: Yes, the Blessed Virgin also had the charisms and graces gratuitously detailed below: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, the gift of faith, the gift of healing, the gift of miracles, the gift of prophecy, discernment of Spirits, the gift of the tongue and the gift of interpreting them (1 Corinthians 12:7-10). These charisms, as St. Thomas teaches[31], were given to her in habit (potentiality), and also in act those appropriate to her condition and mission.

Q. 129. What kinds of knowledge did Mary's intellect possess?

A: Mary's intellect certainly possessed excellent acquired knowledge, like everyone else, even more so than everyone else; excellent infused knowledge suited to her mission; and probably, on

[30] Roschini, Mariology. TIII pp. 224

[31] Summa Theologica III, Q. 27, Art. 5, Repl. 3. There can be no doubt that the Blessed Virgin received, in an excellent way, the gift of wisdom, the gift of miracles, and even the prophetic charism, as Christ had them. But she did not receive them to have the use of these and other similar graces, as Christ did, but in a way suited to her condition. She had, in fact, the use of wisdom in contemplation, according to the passage in Luke 2:19: Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart She did not, however, possess the wisdom to teach, because that was not considered proper for women, as stated in 1 Timothy 2:12: “I do not permit a woman to teach.” The gift of miracles was not hers to use during her lifetime, because at that time the doctrine of Christ needed to be confirmed by miracles; and therefore, it was only appropriate to perform miracles for Christ and his disciples, who were the messengers of Christ's doctrine. For this reason, it is also said of John the Baptist in Torah 10:41 that he performed no miracles, that is, so that everyone's attention would be focused on them.

some important occasion in her life, and in a transitory way, she also possessed blessed knowledge, that is, the beatific vision, which comprises the immediate vision of the divine essence, because if it was probably given to others like Moses and Saint Paul, it must have been granted to her as well.

THE PRIVILEGES OF MARY'S BODY [32]

Q. 130 What were the privileges of Mary's body?

A: The privileges of Mary's body were: 1) Nobility of birth; 2) Perfect complexion; 3) Beauty.

Q. 131 Was Mary of noble birth?

A: Yes, Mary was of noble birth because she descended from the royal line of David (Matthew 1:1) and the priestly line of Aaron (Luke 1:36). Therefore, the noble blood of the king and the priests of the chosen people flowed in her veins.

Q. 132. Did Mary's body have a most perfect complexion?

A: Yes, Mary's body had a most perfect complexion because it always enjoyed a perpetual balance of all its bodily elements. She was thus immune to any disease.

Q. 133. Was Mary's body most beautiful?

A: Yes, Mary's body was most beautiful and of an enchanting beauty, especially because it reflected all the celestial splendor of her soul.

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[32] Roschini, Mariology. TIII, pp. 251

Q. 134. What are Mary's privileges in her body and soul?

A: The privileges that Mary possessed in both her soul and her body are two: 1) perpetual virginity; 2) the Assumption of body and soul into heaven.

Q. 135. Was the Blessed Virgin Mary always a virgin?

A: Yes, the Blessed Virgin Mary was always a virgin, before, during, and after childbirth, as defined by the Church at the General Council of Constantinople[33] and at the Lateran Council under the pontificate of Martin I.

Q. 136. Who denied Mary's perpetual virginity?

A: Virginity before childbirth, that is, virginal conception, was denied by the disciples of Ebion of Carpocrates and Cerinthus. Virginity during childbirth was denied especially by the heretic Giovanninus. Virginity after childbirth was denied by Apollinaris, Bonosus of Sardica, Helvidius, Giovanninus, and others.

[33] 33 Denzinger: 256 Can. 3. If anyone does not confess, in accordance with the Holy Fathers, properly and truthfully that the holy and ever-Virgin Mary is the Mother of God, since she conceived in the last times without seed by the power of the Holy Spirit the same God the Word, properly and truly, who before all ages was born of God the Father, and incorruptibly gave birth to him, remaining, even after childbirth, in her indissoluble virginity, let him be condemned

Q. 137. How is Mary's virginity before childbirth proven?

A: Mary's virginity before childbirth is expressly taught by St. Matthew 1:18-24 and St. Luke 1:26-37 (Isaiah 7:14), which state that Mary conceived Our Lord Jesus Christ by the direct work of the Holy Spirit. It was fitting that if a God were to be conceived, He should be conceived by a Most Pure Virgin; and that if a virgin conceived, she should conceive a God.

Q. 138. How is Mary's virginity proven during childbirth?

A: Mary's virginity in childbirth was proven by the testimony of Saint Matthew, who in chapter 1, verses 22-23, states that in her was fulfilled the famous prophecy of Isaiah: "Behold, a virgin—remaining a virgin—will conceive and bear a son," Isaiah 7:14. Saint Luke also helps us understand that the birth of the Blessed Virgin was not an ordinary birth because she gave her divine Son the necessary assistance that is customary for other newborns. And just as a ray of light passes through glass without damaging it but rather imparting its splendor, so the Incarnate Word, true light of the world, passed through His Blessed Mother not only without causing her any harm, but radiating her with His light.

Q. 139. How is Mary's virginity after childbirth proven?

A: Mary's virginity after childbirth is perpetual, and it is proven by the fact that she, as results from the word given by the Angel, was consecrated to God with a vow of virginity, which bound her to God for all her life.

Q. 140. Who, then, are the brothers of Jesus mentioned in the Gospel?

A: The brothers of Jesus mentioned in the Gospel are his cousins, because such terms are generally used to designate cousins in Sacred Scripture.

Q. 141. How are the words of the Gospel interpreted: Joseph did not know her until the moment he was born, the firstborn son, Jesus?

A: The words "until" and other similar biblical expressions, as St. Jerome affirms, do not always imply a change of actions for the future time, as for example when we say that God will last until the world lasts. Then, "firstborn" was a legal term used to designate the first among male children, whether he was followed by others or was the only son. (Cf. *Jewish inscription dated 5 BC in Egypt, where it is said that the mother died giving birth to her firstborn.*)

Q. 142. At the end of her earthly life, was the Blessed Virgin assumed into heaven body and soul?

A: Yes, the Blessed Virgin Mary, at the end of her earthly life, was assumed into heaven body and soul, and this is a truth that has been solemnly defined. (*Munificentissimus Deus, Pope Pius XII; Nov. 1, 1950*)

Q. 143. What are the reasons for proving the truth of the Assumption of Mary?

A: The reasons for proving the truth of the Assumption of Mary arise from Sacred Scripture and Tradition.

Q. 144. How is the Assumption of Mary proven by Sacred Scripture?

A: Sacred Scripture proves this truth with the Protoevangelium in Genesis 3:15, in which the Blessed Virgin is associated with Christ in the victory over the devil and his work: which is sin and also death (1 John 3). The Blessed Virgin was then associated with Christ in the triumph over death through her assumption, body and soul, into heaven without remaining under the dominion of death.

Q. 145. How is the Assumption of Mary proven through Tradition?

A: The proof of the Assumption of Mary given by Tradition is already demonstrated by the fact that in every century of the Church there have been declarations or at least luminous traces of this truth.

Q. 146. Is the Assumption of Mary fitting?

A: Reason shows us that the Assumption of Mary is most fitting in every respect. Three things, in fact, demand such a triumph: 1) The glory of Christ; 2) the glory of Mary; 3) the glory of heaven.

NATURE OF MARIAN DEVOTION [34]

Q. 147. What does the word devotion mean?

A: The word devotion means to honor a being whose superiority is recognized. Devotion is thus distinguished from mere honor, which does not include the note of superiority on the part of that which is honored and can also be done to someone who has no superiority over us

Q. 148. Is there a difference between worship and devotion?

A: Yes, because the word devotion says much more than the word worship. Strictly speaking, the word devotion implies a total offering to someone, to God for example, to one's country, etc. Commonly, the word devotion is taken in a broader sense to signify the act of the will that is given fervently in the service of a person or a cause.

Q. 149. How many kinds of worship are there?

A: There are three kinds of worship that we recognize in people. Namely: the worship of latria, the worship of dulia, and the worship of hyperdulia.

[34] Cfr. Roschini G. M., Mariologia, T. II, pp. 577 ff. Campana E., Maria nel Culto Cattolico, due volte: 2nd revised and augmented edition by P. G. M. Roschini O. S. M., Turin, Marietti, 1944. Neubert, La dévotion a Marie, Le Puy, 1942.

Q. 150. To whom is the worship of latria due?

A: The worship of latria, or perfect adoration, is due only to God, for His uncreated, infinite excellence, upon which all things created by Him depend

Q. 151. To whom is the worship of dulia due?

A: The worship of dulia, or simple veneration, is due to the servants of God, that is, to the saints, because of their supernatural excellence, that is, their holiness.

Q. 152. To whom is the veneration of hyperdulia rendered?

A: The veneration of hyperdulia, or superior veneration, is that veneration which is rendered to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Mediatrix of humankind, as a consequence of her most singular dignity and holiness.

Q. 153. Does the veneration of hyperdulia differ only in degree or also in kind from the veneration of dulia?

A: The veneration of hyperdulia given to the Blessed Virgin differs in degree from the veneration of dulia if her singular holiness is taken as the motive for such veneration; it also differs in kind if the dignity of Mother of God and Mediatrix of mankind is taken as the motive for such

veneration, a dignity that places her in a higher order than the order in which all the Angels and Saints are found.

Q. 154. How many objects of worship are there relating to the Blessed Virgin?

A: There are four objects of worship relating to the Blessed Virgin: her person; her heart, which is the principal one among the members of her body; her images and relics; and her name.

Q. 155. What are the principal errors concerning the veneration of Mary?

A: Errors concerning the veneration of Mary can be divided into two classes: those of excess and those of deficiency. Errors of excess include those of the Collyrians, a Gnostic sect that considered Mary a goddess, offering her a worship of latria, or adoration due only to God. It should be noted that they were not Catholic and that errors of excess are almost nonexistent; on the contrary, errors of deficiency are extremely common: generally Protestants, who condemn the veneration that the Church offers to Mary as excessive, superstitious, and idolatrous. Jansenists have also attacked the veneration of Mary.

Q. 156. Is the veneration of hyperdulia offered by the Church to the Blessed Virgin Mary legitimate?

A: The veneration of hyperdulia offered by the Church to the person of the Blessed Virgin Mary is legitimate because of the supernatural excellence that shines forth in her as Mother of God and Queen of Saints. The angel Gabriel, in the name of God, and Saint Elizabeth, inspired by God, offered her this veneration.

LEGITIMACY OF MARIAN DEVOTION

Q. 157. Is the veneration offered by the Church to the Heart of Mary legitimate?

A: The veneration that the Church renders to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is legitimate because that heart was the instrument of her most sublime sentiments and is the beating symbol of her ineffable love for God and for humankind.[35]

Q. 158. Is the veneration of relative hyperdulia offered by the Church to images of Mary legitimate?

A: The veneration of relative hyperdulia given by the Church to images of the Blessed Virgin Mary is legitimate, because the veneration offered to the image as such is offered to the person that the image represents. The same must be said of the veneration of relics, her vestments, etc.

Q. 159. Is the veneration offered by the Church to the most holy name of Mary legitimate?

A: The veneration offered by the Church to the Most Holy Name of Mary is legitimate, because the name signifies the person in whom the veneration redounds. The name of Mary is the greatest, the most loving, the most powerful after the name of Jesus.

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[35] Garcia Narcés., C. M. F., The devotion to the Heart of Mary, Catechism, Madrid, 1943

Q. 160. What are the principal elements or acts of Marian devotion?

A: The principal elements or acts of Marian devotion are six: veneration, gratitude, love, invocation, and imitation. Therefore, there is a devotion of veneration, a devotion of gratitude, a devotion of love, a devotion of invocation, a devotion of petition, a devotion of service, and a devotion of imitation.

Q. 161. Why is Mary owed a cult of veneration?

A: Mary is owed a cult of veneration because of her singular greatness derived from the most high and singular quality of being the Mother of God.

Q. 162. How should we show our veneration to Mary?

A: We should show our veneration to Mary in three ways: through our feelings, by nurturing the highest esteem for her; with our words, by exalting her as much as possible; and with our deeds, by working to extend her veneration to all.

Q. 163. Why is Mary owed a cult of gratitude?

A: Mary is owed a cult of gratitude because of the immense benefits we have received from her and, in a particular way, for having cooperated with the Redeemer in redeeming us from the slavery of the devil and sin.

Q. 164. How should we show our gratitude to Mary?

A: There are three ways we can show our gratitude to Mary: by acknowledging the greatness of her blessings; with words, by thanking her; and with deeds, by doing good works in return for her favors.

Q. 165: Why is Mary due a devotion of love?

A: Mary is due a devotion of tender love because she is our true spiritual Mother, full of goodness and beauty.

Q. 166: How should we show Mary our love?

A: We should show Mary our love with words and with deeds. With words, by often telling her that we love her, and with deeds, by avoiding with the utmost prudence everything that is wrong and displeases her; and doing all that pleases her, especially making reparation for offenses against her Immaculate Heart.[36]

[36] Roschini, La Reparazione Mariana, 2a ed., Rovigo 1943

Q. 167: Why is Mary due a cult of invocation?

A: Mary is due a cult of invocation because from her, by Divine Will, derive each and every divine grace.

Q. 168. How should we invoke Mary?

A: We should invoke Mary frequently, in all our spiritual and material needs; with unlimited confidence, placing in her, after God, all our hope.

Q. 169. Why is Mary due a cult of service?[37]

A: Mary is due a cult of service because she is the exalted Queen of Earth and Heaven and of all that was created for whose glory.

Q. 170. How should Mary be served?

A: Mary is served by: 1) being habitually united to her, to her presence in thought, never losing sight of her and living united to her; 2) offering her our whole being and all that we have; 3)

[37] Roschini, Mariologiae T. II, pp. 611.

always showing ourselves ready to her inspirations and desires; 4) seeking to please her in everything; 5) taking a lively share in her joys and in a particular way in her sorrows.

Q. 171: Why is Mary due a cult of imitation?

A: Mary is due a cult of imitation because she is all-holy, the most perfect and most appropriate model for everyone, with all the virtues.

Q. 172: In what way should Mary be imitated?

A: Mary should be imitated faithfully and constantly, particularly in her filial piety toward God, in her enchanting purity, and in her love of neighbor.

USEFULNESS OF MARIAN DEVOTION

Q. 173: Is the devotion we offer to Mary useful?

A: The devotion we offer to Mary is very useful because the greatest benefits for the individual and for society derive from it.

Q. 174. What are the principal benefits that derive from Marian devotion for individuals?

A: The principal benefits that Marian devotion produces for individuals can be reduced to three: 1) the most beautiful protection during life; 2) particular help at the hour of death; 3) inestimable benefits after death.

Q. 175: How does the Blessed Virgin protect her devotees during life?

A: The Blessed Virgin protects her devotees in life with the abundance of spiritual and temporal graces of which Marian devotion is a luminous sign of predestination to the glory of heaven.

Q. 176. How does the Blessed Virgin assist her devotees at the hour of death?

A: The Blessed Virgin assists her devotees at the hour of death in three ways: 1) by imploring upon them sincere sorrow for all their sins; 2) by obtaining the grace of perfect resignation to the sacrifice of life; 3) by protecting them against the devil.

Q. 177: In what way does the Blessed Virgin Mary shower her devotees with graces after death?

A: The Blessed Virgin Mary showers her devotees with graces after death: 1) By assisting them at the moment of judgment; 2) By making her help and influence felt in purgatory and leading them to paradise.

Q. 178: What are the principal benefits derived from Marian devotion in the home?

A: In the home, Marian devotion bestows countless benefits and graces of a spiritual and material nature, and above all, the powerful influence of Mary on the mother, who is like the heart of the family.

Q. 179: What are the principal benefits that Marian devotion brings to religious society?

A: The benefits that Marian devotion brings to religious society, that is, to the Church, are primarily two: 1) doctrinal, through which the Catholic faith flourished and has always been fruitful; 2) moral influence, through which the Church becomes a wonderful garden in which there are flowers of virtues of all kinds, especially lilies and the fruits of heroism.

Q. 180: What are the main benefits that Marian devotion brings to civil society?

A: The main benefits that Marian devotion brings to civil society are summarized in the admirable influence that the Virgin exerts in every age on TRUTH, that is, on science, on GOODNESS, that is, on morality, and on BEAUTY, in art. After the veneration of Christ, devotion to Mary is the greatest factor of civilization for civil society.

Q. 181: Is devotion to Mary necessary for salvation?

A: Yes, devotion to Mary is for obtaining our eternal salvation. For this reason, the Code of Canon Law (1919), in Canon 1276, after stating that it is good and useful to invoke the saints with prayers and venerate their relics and images, commands with an imperative that above all the saints, all the faithful should cultivate a filial devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. From this also follows the universal practice of the Church, which in the liturgy invites us to continually turn to Mary.

Q. 182: In what sense is devotion to Mary necessary for salvation?

A: Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is necessary for salvation, in the sense that for adults who know Mary well enough, it is morally necessary to obtain eternal salvation. Therefore, if one of these adults were to show positive indifference or refuse to venerate and invoke Mary, it is morally impossible for them to be saved.

Q. 183: Explain to me in a little more detail this need for devotion to Mary

To better understand the necessity of devotion to Mary for salvation, it is necessary to observe that: 1) it is a moral necessity, so that whoever refuses to make use of such a means would seriously compromise their salvation; 2) only for adults and no longer for children, so that devotion to Mary is as necessary for salvation as sanctifying grace and baptism; 3) for adults who know Mary sufficiently, that is, the place she occupies and the necessary part she plays, through divine free disposition in the work. Those who, through no fault of their own, are

ignorant of these things, can easily be assumed to have an interpretive Marian devotion, in the sense that they would be willing to invoke Mary if they had sufficient knowledge of her. Also, 4) to have indifference or positive rejection, because of such lacerating content.[38] Logically, it is assumed that devotion to Mary is practically considered illegitimate or at least useless, contrary to what the Council of Trent defined in (Session XXV).

Q. 184: For what reasons is devotion to Mary morally necessary?

A: The reasons why devotion to Mary is morally necessary are: 1) Because if we do not venerate or invoke Mary, we deprive ourselves of the most effective means, after resorting to God, to obtain salvation, Mary being the dispenser of all divine graces and, in a particular way, of the most great grace of final perseverance; 2) Because that same natural law that explicitly commands us to avoid everything that could seriously compromise our salvation also implicitly commands us not to reject devotion to Mary, intimately and indissolubly united to Christ in the work of our eternal salvation; 3) Because the liturgy of the Church, the Church Fathers, the Doctors, and ecclesiastical writers affirmed, in more or less clear and explicit terms, the necessity of devotion to Mary for salvation.

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MARIAN DEVOTION [39]

[38] Cfr. Roschini G. M.. The Door of Heaven, or the necessity of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary for salvation, Venice, Libr. Emiliana Editrice, 1935.
[39] Roschini G. M., Mariologia, T. II, pp. 584

Q. 185: Where does Marian devotion originate?

A: Marian devotion has its origin in the very substance of Christianity, that is, from the very mystery of the Incarnation and the Redemption, to which Mary is intimately and indissolubly united. For this reason, she was and is honored alongside Christ.

Q. 186: Can the assertion of some Protestants, according to which the Christian veneration of Mary originated in the pagan worship of goddesses, be sustained?

A: Such an assertion cannot be sustained in any way because the Christian veneration of the Virgin is entirely different from the pagan veneration of goddesses. Let us now examine the essential and accidental elements of the aforementioned assertion. The veneration of goddesses, in fact, was a cult of latria, or worship, while the Christian veneration of Mary is simply a cult of hyperdulia, that is, veneration. The effects of one and the other are entirely opposite. It is therefore not possible to derive one from the other.

Q. 187: What are the main stages of Marian veneration?

The main stages of Marian devotion are three: 1) from the Apostles to the Council of Ephesus; 2) from the Council of Ephesus to the 16th century; 3) from the 16th century to the present day.

Q. 188: What was notable in the first stage of Marian devotion?

A: In the first stage of Marian devotion (from the time of the Apostles to the Council of Ephesus, 431 AD), some very eloquent statements are noteworthy, as they were the seed from which the magnificent tree of Marian devotion grew. The main facts are: 1) the very lively faith regarding the principal prerogatives of Mary; 2) the practice of invoking the saints, especially martyrs, at least from the end of the second century; 3) the images of Mary, some of which (like those in the catacombs of Saint Priscilla) date from the first half of the second century; 4) the custom of invoking Mary's patronage, end of the 2nd-3rd century, with the famous prayer "Sub tuum praesidium, (Under your protection...)" 5) the institution of several Marian feasts at the end of the 4th century. Several statements by the Fathers referring directly to Marian worship have been lost since the end of the second half of the 4th century. Therefore, the practice of venerating and invoking Mary was universal in that first half.

Q. 189: What is notable in the second stage of Marian devotion?

A: In the second stage of Marian devotion (from the Council of Ephesus to the 16th century), religious devotion, both liturgical and private, developed increasingly from near the beginning of the 5th century, culminating with St. Bernard. The nature of this devotion was determined in the 13th century, particularly with St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure.

Q. 190: What is notable in the third stage of Marian devotion?

A: In the third stage of Marian devotion (from the 16th century to the present day), the devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is better studied in its dogmatic foundations, especially because of the reaction against the assertions of the Protestants and Jansenists. St. Peter Canisius, St. Alphonsus Liguori, and St. Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort, among others, stand out as great apostles of Marian devotion.

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